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ACTION PRM-10

INFO	LOG-00	AF-01	AID-01	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	INL-02	OASY-00
	ANHR-01	EB-01	EUR-01	OIGO-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-10	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02
	OMB-01	PA-02	PM-00	PRS-01	P-01	SP-00	SR-00
	SS-00	STR-01	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	PRME-01
	DRL-09	G-00	/048W				

-----B1262E 161203Z /38

O 161203Z MAR 95
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0545
INFO RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
JOINT STAFF WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 GENEVA 002233

STATE FOR G, PRM, IO, AF, DRL, PM/ISP
PASS AID FOR A/AID, BHR, BHR/OFDA, BHR/FFP, AFR, PPC
ALSO PASS NSC
ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PREF PREL PHUM MOPS EAID AORC RW CG UN
SUBJECT: HLWG: HEADS OF WFP AND UNHCR ASK FOR URGENT
FOOD DONATIONS FOR RWANDA/BURUNDI REGION

REFS: (A) STATE 60562, (B) GENEVA 2090, (C) GENEVA 1979

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1. SUMMARY. WFP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BERTINI AND HIGH

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COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES OGATA ADDRESSED THE HUMANITARIAN LIAISON WORKING GROUP (HLWG) TO UNDERLINE THE GRAVITY OF THE FOOD SHORTAGES IN THE RWANDA/BURUNDI REGION. BERTINI SAID THAT FOOD AND CASH ARE URGENTLY NEEDED TO FILL A USD 215 MILLION FOOD GAP WHICH HAS ALREADY RESULTED IN DRASTIC REDUCTIONS OF FOOD RATIONS TO REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS THROUGHOUT THE REGION. OGATA ANNOUNCED UNHCR CASH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR FOOD AND JOINED BERTINI IN STRESSING THAT FOOD SHORTAGES CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT BE USED AS LEVERAGE TO PROMOTE REPATRIATION, ESPECIALLY WHEN SECURITY CONDITIONS INSIDE RWANDA ARE QUESTIONABLE. A FEW OTHER DONORS, LED BY AMBASSADOR SPIEGEL'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE LATEST USG PLEDGE, DESCRIBED ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH REDUCED THE GAP TO JUST UNDER USD 190 MILLION. (ON MARCH 15, A WFP OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE EU HAD JUST ANNOUNCED A USD 16 MILLION PLEDGE, WHICH WOULD FURTHER REDUCE THE GAP TO USD 173 MILLION.) END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR SPIEGEL CHAIRED A MEETING OF HLWG AMBASSADORS (24 DONOR GOVERNMENTS PLUS THE EU) ON MARCH 14. THE LAST PORTION OF THE MEETING, AT THE SPECIAL REQUEST OF CATHERINE BERTINI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, AND SADAOKO OGATA, UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, WAS DEVOTED TO A DISCUSSION OF THE CRITICAL NATURE OF FOOD SHORTAGES FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF IN THE RWANDA/BURUNDI REGION.

WFP URGENTLY NEEDS FOOD AND CASH

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3. DIRECTOR BERTINI SAID THAT WFP URGENTLY NEEDS FOOD AND CASH, THAT RATIONS HAVE BEEN CUT 50 PERCENT IN SOME CAMPS, AND THAT THERE IS NO FOOD IN THE PIPELINE FOR APRIL. BERTINI EMPHASIZED THAT WFP HAS TAKEN EVERY POSSIBLE INTERIM MEASURE (BORROWING FROM STOCKPILES INTENDED FOR OTHER USES, MORE DIRECT DISTRIBUTION TO REFUGEES, CUTTING THE FOOD ROLLS, ETC.) TO RUN A STREAMLINED OPERATION, BUT THAT THE MAGNITUDE OF THE

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PROBLEM IS OVERWHELMING WITH 3 MILLION PEOPLE TO FEED WITH AN AVERAGE OF 54,000 MT OF FOOD PER MONTH. SHE ADDED THAT EVEN CASH CONTRIBUTIONS MAY NOT ALLEVIATE SHORTAGES IMMEDIATELY BECAUSE "NORMAL" ACCESS TO LOCAL FOOD SOURCES HAS BEEN SEVERELY AFFECTED BY THE DROUGHT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. SHE EXPLAINED THAT MOST OF THE FOOD AVAILABLE FROM UGANDA HAS BEEN PURCHASED AND THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS UNWILLING TO PART WITH ITS STOCKS OWING TO DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN THE AREA.

4. BERTINI NOTED THAT SOME DONORS HAD "WHISPERED" THAT THE SHORTAGES COULD BE A USEFUL INCENTIVE TO PROMOTE REPATRIATION, AND THAT SHE REJECTS SUCH IDEAS AS AN UNWORKABLE STRATEGY. SHE REMINDED PARTICIPANTS OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO UPHOLD BASIC HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES UNDER THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS, ADDING THAT DEPRIVING REFUGEES OF FOOD COULD POSE SERIOUS SECURITY RISKS TO THE INTERNATIONAL RELIEF EFFORT AND STABILITY IN THE REGION.

5. BERTINI REPORTED THAT WFP HAD RECEIVED PLEDGES (USD
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13 MILLION IN MAIZE FROM GERMANY AND A USD 3 MILLION CASH CONTRIBUTION FROM THE NETHERLANDS) SINCE THE FOOD ALERT WAS ISSUED ON MARCH 7, AND THAT WFP'S NEEDS STOOD AT ABOUT 300,000 METRIC TONS OF FOODSTUFFS, WHICH WHEN COMBINED WITH CASH NEEDS, ARE VALUED AT SOME USD 215 MILLION. (NOTE: THESE FIGURES REFLECT RECENT STATE/PRM AND USAID/OFDA CASH CONTRIBUTIONS. END NOTE.)

DONOR PLEDGES REDUCE GAP

6. A FEW DONORS, LED BY THE U.S. (PER REFTTEL A), ANNOUNCED COMMITMENTS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE AS FOLLOWS:

ADDITIONAL PLEDGES (MARCH 14)--

-- U.S. USD 15 MILLION (28,000 MT)

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-- IFRC USD 5 MILLION
-- UNHCR USD 2 MILLION
-- SWITZERLAND USD 1 MILLION
-- DENMARK USD 2.6 MILLION

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BERTINI QUICKLY ADDED THESE PLEDGES AND SAID THAT THE
SHORTFALL WAS NOW EQUIVALENT TO USD 189 MILLION.

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(NOTE. THE FOLLOWING DAY, A WFP OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE
EU HAD JUST ANNOUNCED A USDOL 16 MILLION PLEDGE, WHICH
WOULD FURTHER REDUCE THE GAP TO USDOLS 173 MILLION. END
NOTE.)

DO NOT LINK REPATRIATION TO FOOD DISTRIBUTION

7. HIGH COMMISSIONER OGATA REITERATED THE CRITICAL
NATURE OF THE FOOD SHORTAGES BY NOTING THAT RATIONS IN
GOMA HAVE BEEN REDUCED 50 PERCENT WITH STOCKS DOWN TO
THE EQUIVALENT OF ONE WEEK. SHE ADDED THAT THE
SITUATION IN TANZANIA IS EQUALLY CRITICAL WHERE STOCKS
ARE DOWN TO TWO WEEKS. OGATA EMPHASIZED THAT FOOD
SHORTAGES IN THE PAST HAVE CAUSED SECURITY PROBLEMS IN
THE CAMPS, AND THAT DONORS SHOULD NOT BE MISLED INTO
THINKING THAT REPATRIATION COULD BE LEVERAGED WITH FOOD
DISTRIBUTION: "THINGS ARE NOT THAT SIMPLE." SHE SAID
THAT UNHCR'S PRIORITY STRATEGY IS REPATRIATION, AND
UNHCR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE REGION RECENTLY DISCUSSED
HOW HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES WILL SHIFT AS
REPATRIATION TAKES PLACE. IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER,
UNHCR MUST MAINTAIN TWO MILLION REFUGEES IN THE CAMPS
WHILE IT PROMOTES REPATRIATION. SHE SAID THE REAL
QUESTION IS, CAN THESE REFUGEES GO BACK TO SAFETY INSIDE
RWANDA? WE CANNOT FORCE REFUGEES TO RETURN BY DEPRIVING
THEM OF FOOD, SHE CONCLUDED.

8. OGATA NOTED THAT UNHCR AND WFP HAVE MADE GREAT

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STRIDES IN DISTRIBUTING THE FOOD DIRECTLY TO REFUGEES,
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HICH HAS HELPED LOOSEN THE GRIP OF CAMP LEADERS ON THE
POPULATION. SHE ALSO REPORTED THAT IN A FEW DAYS' TIME,
500 ZAIRIAN SOLDIERS WILL BE DEPLOYED ALONG WITH SOME
FORTY LIAISON OFFICERS FOR THE NETHERLANDS (16),
SWITZERLAND (1), CAMEROON (10) AND SENEGAL (10-20).

9. RETURNING TO THE FOOD SHORTAGE ISSUE, MRS. OGATA
ANNOUNCED THAT UNHCR TOOK THE UNPRECEDENTED STEP OF
WITHDRAWING USD 2 MILLION FROM ITS EMERGENCY FUND TO
HELP FILL THE FOOD GAP. USD ONE MILLION WILL BE GIVEN
DIRECTLY TO WFP AND THE REST WILL BE GIVEN TO IFRC,
WHICH IN TURN WILL COMBINE IT WITH A USD 5 MILLION
CONTRIBUTION FROM ITS OWN FUNDS.

10. OGATA ALSO REPORTED THAT SHE MET WITH SEVERAL
PRESIDENTS FROM THE REGION DURING THE COPENHAGEN
SUMMIT. SHE NOTED THAT LEADERS FROM REFUGEE HOSTING
COUNTRIES (SHE SINGLED OUT TANZANIA) ARE EXTREMELY
CONCERNED ABOUT THE SECURITY IMPACT OF THESE SHORTAGES
IN THEIR COUNTRIES. SHE SAID THAT THE FOOD SHORTAGES
MEANT THERE WAS A POTENTIAL FOR UNEASINESS, POSSIBLY
RIOTS, IN THE CAMPS.
SPIEGEL

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